

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Wacton Village Hall.
Weds 4th February 2026 at 6.00pm at Wacton Village Hall**

Present: - Chair Gary Mulhall, Councilors: Freddie Boone, Pete Fraser, Kat Ireson and Mike Hollamby

County Councillor Alison Thomas,

Parish Clerk: Alan Arber (joined the meeting after item 2)

6 Members of the public

1. To receive and discuss the clerks Resignation

The clerk's partner was very angry that a Parishioner felt it necessary to contact him during the Xmas holiday period when he was on leave and again when they were away for the weekend recently. As such the clerk felt that without any suitable plan to stop this happening and the fact that a parishioner felt that the clerk was her personal secretary his family had asked that he submit his resignation unless a plan is in place to stop this happening again.

The council admitted they were sad to receive the clerk's resignation and as such felt that due to current issues, they could not accept this, and a plan was made to ensure the clerk was not contacted when he is on leave by parishioners and that they must always respect this.

A new email address enquiries@wacton-pc.gov.uk has been set up for parishioners to use when the clerk is on leave and all councillors have access should an urgent issue occur, also the clerks mobile (07541644621) will now be the only point of contact for the clerk and this will only be answered when the clerk is on duty, and the number will be put on the website for all to see. Should parishioners not respect these requests we stand to lose our excellent clerk, meaning the council would be in a difficult position moving forward at this incredibly difficult time with the current issues the clerk is dealing with in his usual consensus way.

It was hoped that after these plans are put in place the clerk will speak with his family and will remain in post when we most need him.

Proposed Freddie Boone Seconded Gary Mulhall

Lots of comments on this and the parish council has a duty of care to The Clerk at all times and Parishioners need to understand this. All parishioners at the meeting gave their support to the clerk and hoped we will reconsider his resignation moving forward

2. Public Participation

It was felt that due to the nature of the job and emails comes with the role a parishioner felt that the clerk should understand this and make allowances moving forward.

3. To consider any apologies for absence

Councillor Prentice has sent the clerk a message to say she will be leaving the

council, and the clerk will action elections to ensure this is noted asap and the co-option policy is put in place

4. To receive any disclosures of interest.

None

5. To approve the minutes from the meeting held on 4th January 2026

These were agreed as a true record of the meeting held on 4th January 2026 and duly signed by the chair

Proposed Freddie Boone Seconded Pete Fraser

6. To consider matters arising from the last minutes (for information only).

All on the current agenda

7. To receive a report from the County councillor.

Alison has a couple of items to say around the Field Bess Planning Application 2025/1689 from highways with a number of issues and planning officers are grateful to have such a strong objection from highways and there are many issues reported along with a lorry on its side in the ditch.

If the application is refused Field have the opportunity to appeal if they have the required to the Planning Inspectorate.

In regard to East Pye Solar the county council have been asked to quote on the PINS process and the officers felt that it has met the bare minimum requirement but other feel it is not sufficient from County leaders and they have not submitted in the correct manner.

A decision by the secretary of state to postpone the local elections with a judicial review due soon and we await the decision if they will go ahead or be stopped.

LGR and devolution elections that were due to happen in 2027 are now going ahead in 2028 this is due to a few reasons detailed. LGR is still awaiting this to be decided and as yet we don't have a defined date but as yet nothing is known.

8. To receive a report from the district councillors.

District Councillor Kim Carsok sent her detailed report, and this is attached as [Appendix 1](#)

9. To receive a report from the Village Hall committee.

No report received

10. To consider planning applications.

- East Pye Solar and Scoping documents comments (for Info only)

Nothing sent to the clerk, but the county councillor commented that the DCO order 26/2/2026 with the planning application going in later on this application.

- Field Battery Storage Plant update (for Info only)

2025/1689

Proposal: Erection of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure including access, drainage, landscaping and other incidental works

Location: Land North of The Junction of Market Lane and Carr Lane
Great Moulton Norfolk

Applicant: Field Long Stratton Ltd

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

- To agree Wacton PC Response and Objection report [Appendix 2](#)

The clerk along with Councillor Freddie Boone had done the detailed objection to this planning application and it will be emailed to planning at the end of this meeting and will be put on the noticeboard and website under the relevant area for all to see. Please note that if the objection is upheld the company may seek to go through the Planning Inspectorate route to get their proposal through, if possible,

Field has also had objections from Local Flood authority and Noise assessment moving forward.

140 signatures from Wacton have been submitted.

The clerk has delivered over 40 to Planning on Monday 2/2/2026

A question was raised that will Field be putting in a fund of £200,000 for the local councils for community projects. It is known that no monies would be released till after the building has been finished and sometimes it's difficult to get the monies

Proposed Gary Mulhall Seconded Kat Ireson

- To discuss the possibility of Tree Preservation Orders in Wacton

The clerk will be dealing with this in the next couple of weeks as he has the necessary contacts to speak/email to asap

11. Governance

No governance

12. Correspondence: -

Parishioner's responses taken to SNDC Planning as agreed on 2/2/2026

CAF Funding details received and will be done asap

Quotes for benches received for CAF Funding

Emails to councillors with clerk's resignation

2025/1689 planning objection work undertaken for submission

2025/1689 planning objection submitted to planning

NPTS Spring seminar booked for Chair, clerk and Councillor Kat Ireson

New Defib pads ordered

New defib pads received

Many emails and a phone call from a Parishioner regarding 2025/1689 whilst the clerk was on leave.

Email from County Councillor on sale of Norse homes

Councillor Hollamby forms submitted to join the council to elections

Elections reply saying all forms in order

2025/1689 BESS planning application objection letter worked on with councillor Boone

Meeting held with Great Moulton PC regarding 2025/1689 objection

Letter from Freddie Boone regarding tree on the green near his property and the splitting of the costs with the council for its removal

13. Maintenance

Trees at Blacks Meadow

The fruit trees need cutting back and it again needs doing. It was agreed they

need reshaping to get this done before the end of March. It was agreed if we can get a working party to help.

14. To note receipts for January

None noted

15. Authorization of payments

January Payments

- To approve payment of Clerks Salary and expenses for Jan £675.01
- To approve payment to Norfolk Pension Scheme for Clerks Pension Jan £228.70
- To approve payment to HMRC for Tax and NI £214.43
- To approve payment to Parish Online for Gov.uk yearly email subscription £216.00
- To approve payment to NPTS for autumn spring seminar for clerk/Chair and a councillor £201.60
- To approve payment to BT for Broadband Charges £37.14
- To approve payment to 02 for clerk's credit card £12.91
- To approve payment to Lloyds for Credit card charge £3.00
- To approve payment to Defib Store for new defib pads £62.39
- To approve payment to Unity Trust for Monthly bank Charges £6.00

Proposed Gary Mulhall

Seconded Kat Ireson

- To Note the financial position of the council
The council started the month of Feb with a balance of £11,580.05 and after today's payments of £1655.88 we have a balance of £9922.17 which is a little down on last year's figure but with a vat refund of £327.89 it will help the council and the clerk asked that only important bills are paid in March please.

16. Report on any ongoing matters:

- The woodland project and Bridge in the Copse repair.
The clerk will be submitting a CAF fund application for the works to be done along with a picnic area to be made up on the green and hopefully two small play equipment items for the play area
- Tree Issues on The Green
Councillor Freddie Boone commented that there is a tree on the green near his property that needs looking at asap and he is willing to help the council with any costs incurred being split with himself and the council on a pro-rata basis. The quote he had received was for £840 incl. vat and it is looking to be done April/ May when our precept monies are in. Trees on the edge of the green need a trim up and again this will be done once time allows. It is hindering the grass cutters as well.
- Councillor and Clerk Training

The clerk recently attended the SLCC Practitioners conference when many issues all councils faced were discussed including Assertion 10, Solar Panel Farms, new governance along with insurance and village hall issues discussed and he also attended many workshops on bullying, vexatious complainers and working with staff which were all excellent and was well worth the 3 days in the midlands and he looks forward to attending the excellent NPTS spring seminar with colleague's from the council and then the excellent SLCC National Conference in October. Need to sort out full council training along with Great Moulton moving forward

- Defib Pads

Ordered and received and now in place

- CAF Funding

The clerk is working on this and hopes to submit by the end of next week at the latest for a grant of £10,000 for works on the woodland project bridge rebuild and a picnic area and a couple of small play area items as detailed earlier in the meeting

17. Matters raised by councillors and members of the public. (For information only).

Nothing raised by Councillors

A question was asked on The Clerks resignation and if he was definitely staying or going. He replied that he will speak to his partner and reply to the council.

Questions were raised on the Bess application and how they find out of our objections, and it was noted that we do not submit our objections till the last minute. All the statutory consultees have put in massive objections especially with highways and with Field being a local planning application field they do not have the authority to do what they require, and we are not pre-warning them moving forward.

Are they going to bring a heavy wheeled vehicle and it was felt the rumours and hearsay was not great around this

The Soup Kitchen is going well with a regular 7-8 attendees. Funding has allowed us to go through till the end of March if the volunteer group wants to carry on.

18. To receive details of the Parish Speed Watch group, plus Volunteers that are needed and SAM data download.

The clerk has not had time to download the SAM 2 machine, and this will be done and moved in the next two weeks to Moulton end of the village

No speed watch has been out lately due to issues with the team.

19. To discuss the need for new parish councillors

With Councillor Prentice now leaving the council we still have 2 vacancies and new councillors are welcomed at this very important time for the council moving forward

20.Items for the next agenda.

CAF funding application

All council training

Meeting closed 19.02 pm

Dates of next meeting:

Parish Council meeting 4th March 2026 6pm